

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 28, 2014

The Honorable Eric Shinseki  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki,

Due to recent reports regarding the serious mismanagement of the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) in Arizona, resulting in delayed medical care and even deaths of veterans, we have serious concerns about the care being provided to veterans served by the VAMCs in Biloxi, MS and Jackson, MS. Although we are well aware that the Inspector General is looking into these allegations across the VA enterprise, Congress's oversight role and funding responsibility creates an immediate need for information on the current operation of all VA facilities, particularly the ones that our constituents utilize on a regular basis.

Accordingly we request the following data for the Jackson and Biloxi VAMCs in writing as soon as possible.

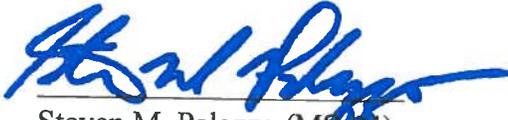
- 1) Please confirm the existence or lack of multiple waiting lists for veterans.
- 2) What are the current wait times for primary care and specialty care at each facility?
- 3) What is the wait list process and how are veterans referred to outside providers?

Recently several of our staff members have been in touch with officials at both the Jackson and Biloxi VAMCs as reports of impropriety continue to rise and veteran confidence continues to plummet. Following last year's Congressional Hearings on the Jackson (G.V. Sonny Montgomery) VAMC and the realization that there have been veteran deaths caused by pure negligence, we have serious concerns about the ability of that facility to meet the needs of our Veteran population. Given the recent removal of the Chief of Surgery at the Biloxi VAMC, we also have great interest in ensuring that vital surgical procedures resume in a timely and safe manner.

We certainly understand the constraints that the VA system is under as it serves an aging and rapidly increasing veteran population; however, there is no excuse for negligence of this scale. We will do everything in our power to ensure these veterans are not being cast aside or their

cases mismanaged. Our veterans deserve better. We look forward to your prompt response to our questions and your immediate attention to these concerning reports.

Sincerely,



Steven M. Palazzo (MS-04)  
Member of Congress



Bradley Byrne (AL-01) M.C.  
Member of Congress